

ASRM Newsletter - May 2020

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Introduction

Well, is it an editorial, thought for the month, introduction or preamble. ‘Editorial’ sounds too lofty an ambition, ‘thought for the month’ sounds far too reflective and ‘preamble’ sounds like something an old bloke would waffle on about in a model railway newsletter. So... Preamble it will be! However, for this month it will be an introduction, for the simple reason that I’m literally introducing myself... I’ve met most of you but I’m sure not all of you!

I am an ex Sailor of her majesty's Royal Navy. Always had a passing interest in railways as a youth like most, but travelling around the country by train kindled this interest into something much more. Standing on lonely platforms late at night stirred an interest to discover the local and industrial history that grew this infrastructure. Country walks to discover long disused lines and reading OS Nock and Adrian Vaughan developed a thirst for knowledge to understand how it was all done. The past they say is a different world and if it was when I was a young sailor it definitely is now I’m a retired one! (not fully retired - I work for Caterpillar!). For me, the only way we can recreate that world is now in model form. The modern railway holds only minor interest for me and our wonderful preserved railways, as wonderful as they are, are adulterated with the modern world which sticks it's two penneth in everywhere you look. To this end, it was always the 4mm scales in EM gauge and P4 gauge that gripped me. The fascinating look at how we were; before TV, the motor car and liberal

lifestyles that are all hallmarks of today's society, took away all that was beautiful and horrific about the industrial age of empire. Below is a picture of a different world from Nick Coppin. It was taken by his Father Alan Coppin in 1966. The world was about to change. Of course, not everyone harks back to this long gone era and many model railways reflect more recent or even contemporary times. The lives, travels and times of most modelers are reflected in their creations.

This is now laid out before you in the following pages and it's wonderful to see what is created by Railways Modellers in and around Shrewsbury. We have quite a range of interests it would seem. I would like to thank everyone that has forwarded their pictures and articles for this newsletter. I don't imagine input will always be as abundant or easy to stitch together. If you wish to have something included in the next newsletter please forward it to Nick preferably in 'word document' format but please don't worry too much... however you send it, we will sort it out.



Isle of White 1966: An ageing LSWR O2 0-4-4 tank engine, W28, 'Ashey' with fireman awaiting the right away perhaps with the driver in the auto coach. Built at Nine Elms in 1890 and moved to the IOW in 1926 this venerable little loco was withdrawn in 1967 when the Island Line was electrified and the ex-Underground trains moved there. Thanks to Gordon Woods for scanning the original colour slide.

ASRM: Chairman's Report 2019-2020

First I wish to start by apologising to you all for the lateness of this report. We shall probably never know now whether it was covid-19 or not, but June and I were struck down by a very unpleasant virus for two and a half weeks from which we are but slowly regaining our strength. (I hope it was covid-19 because I do not want to go through that again!) I hope you are all keeping safe and well in these exceptional times.

In what I believe has been one of the most interesting and best years we have had, it is sad to record that for many of us the most important event was the death of the much loved and respected David Knight, for so many years the Secretary and indeed inspiration of the Association. The large number of members who attended his funeral is testament to the fact that he will be greatly missed.

I am sure David would have been impressed by and proud of the exceptional quality and variety of the meetings we have had over this last year, as have I. Two things have stood out for me particularly:-
First, the external speakers have been of the highest standard. Geoff Kent on Buildings in Plastic; Jonathan David on the Rhymney Railway; Christopher Duffell (maintaining the high standards we have come to expect from his brother Stephen) on the Lynton and Barnstaple Railway; and David Maidment last month on his career as a South Wales station master have all given us fascinating evenings of interest and instruction: the highest overall standard I can remember. Our in-club speaker, Ian Payne, was equal to the best of them with his fascinating talk on signalling and his time at Shrewsbury signal boxes.
The second area where I have been so impressed, and I know I am not alone in this, is in the quite remarkable excellence and variety of modelling talent shown by our members in those evenings where we have shared our models or our experience and techniques. It has been an inspiration (and occasionally perhaps a little daunting!) to see what has been and can be achieved. There is not time here to mention you all, but you know who you are, and, equally, we know who you are and are very grateful for the time and trouble you have taken to give us so much enjoyment and encouragement.

As usual I recommend that you can relive some of these pleasures by going to our splendid website, which has been expertly run by Ian Payne, with editorial assistance from David Evans and excellent photographic content from Sam Ryan. Thank you all three so much for all you have done to keep us up to date and relevant, and a special thank you to David, who has reluctantly decided on health grounds that he must give up the editing and also membership of your committee.

For the fact that this has been such an exceptional year for the standard of the meetings credit must go to Nick Coppin, who powers us along with his organisational drive and his inspiration. His initiative in producing a plasticard challenge and a news-letter in place of the AGM is typical of his dedication to the Association. (Thank you to all who contributed to this.) Dave Gotliffe has kept us on a financially even keel, and has coped well with the difficulties that the new letting arrangements at the Priors School have brought, ensuring that we are always well watered and biscuited at our meetings. My deepest gratitude goes to both of them for all they do.

It is a great pity that at this difficult time we have to accept the suspension of meetings for the indefinite future, but rest assured that we shall be up and running again as soon as we possibly can. In the meantime I hope you will feel able to keep in touch through the news-letter. Have no doubt that eventually, as the Queen said, "We will meet again". Keep safe, keep healthy, keep modelling!

Peter Cox
16th April 2020

A Garden Layout – Ian Payne



Trish (those of you that know will know!) simmers at Hedge End Station. The two coaches are Bachmann Annie or Clarabel cut down the middle and rebuild as two compartment coaches. These have since been sold on as they are a little on the small side as can be seen in this shot.

The local passenger train just departing on a wet day. The dry stone walls are made from broken pieces of slate and built up with mastic. The water tower is a margarine tub on top of a thermalite block covered with border wall tiles.



A view from the station forecourt to the loco shed. The PW Shed in the foreground is a carved thermalite building block. The Loco Shed is some offcuts of multiwall roofing plastic clad with blocks sawn from a thermalite building block with a roof of self adhesive lead flashband

An Irish branch line engine shed – Eric Challoner

The shed is supposedly on the old Irish North Western line from Dundalk to Enniskillen, part of the Great Northern Railway (Ireland) network of lines back in the 1950's and shows a 'U' class locomotive (1915 version) number 65, built, as most of their engines were, by Beyer-Peacock in Manchester. Her original number was 200 and she was subsequently renumbered by the UTA when the GNR(I) was absorbed. I still need to get



the nameplate 'Lough Melvin' made by someone and attached. The GNR used the identical shade of blue to the Caledonian Railway i.e. - Caledonian Sky Blue. The stone shed is from Metcalfe, suitably doctored; the water tank and coal stage are Ratio products, again with some modification. The 'creels'

for hand loading coal (as often happened at rural sheds) are from the old Merit range, now Peco Modelscene, with the yellow Carbide containers they came with, removed and replaced with coal. For the rails, I spaced them at the correct 21mm apart for 5ft 3ins gauge, and used code 75 Bullhead in Phosphor Bronze, as It give a nice impression of light rust. I brought the diorama to a meeting once, but it was quite some time back, and many of our current members will not have seen it.



Much Pending

This small (6'0" x 2'6") N gauge layout " was due to appear at the Bishop's Castle Exhibition on 21st March which of course had to be cancelled to the disappointment of many.



The layout, a roundy roundy, was originally built to try out a few things before building my "final" large layout. Keen eyed members will notice GWR stock running on track with concrete sleepers. This is because I normally run modern image but for the intended exhibition I felt it more appropriate to run GW stock.

I tried my hand with one or two things new to me at the time, some of which were successful and some were not (lessons were learned):-

- a). Being DCC (ZTC system) I used copper tape as a bus and laid this on the top of the baseboards. This made it very easy to wire up but the mistake was that once the scenery had been applied the location of the tape was lost. Hence all trees had to be planted on raised sections of scenery to avoid the possibility of breaking the tape.
- b). Points providing the bi-directional line through the station were cut to bring the track closer than the standard Peco '6 foot'. This took some doing but the result has been worthwhile as it looks far more prototypical as trains pass.
- c). Super elevation was applied to all curves not containing a point. This has also added to the effect as I have always considered that curves laid flat provide an illusion that the train is falling over. The lesson learned here was to apply a gradual transition in elevation since long wheeled based two axle wagons (e.g. Toads) would de-rail. Larger scales with compensating axles would, I imagine, not have this difficulty.



- d). For point control I used wire-in-tube with mini Gem levers and slide switches to change polarity. This has proved successful, but I have now changed to frog juicers to change the polarity in order to provide neater 'signal boxes'.
- e). I used Sundela on 2"x1" softwood. The difference in thermal expansion of the two timbers has caused some deflection. A lesson learned, and I now build monocoque baseboards solely out of MDF and have not experienced this problem.



Having moved 18 months ago to a property requiring full treatment to both externals and internals has meant that up to now my large layout has remained in storage. However, the work is now mainly behind me and as I write, I have just started to decorate the railway room which will house this layout. The track plan is reasonably extensive (86 points) deliberately to provide operational interest once the layout is finished. I once heard a rumour that somebody did once finish a layout, but then it was only a rumour! Hence self-isolation will not in the least become onerous as I am sure members will agree that this hobby of ours can never be described as boring.

Mike Bennett

32mm Gauge Waggon by Nick Coppin



A Severn Models WDLR ration wagon built from one of Andrew Vaughan's etched brass kits. It is 16mm to the foot scale narrow gauge running on 32mm track.



0 gauge 16 ton mineral wagons I have just finished weathering. They are being pulled by an 9792, an ex-GWR pannier tank sold to the NCB and somewhat abused!

Historic Words from Mike Bennet

L&NWR - QUITE THE WORDSMITH



Our neighbour recently moved to the next village and in turning over the garden came across this sign. Whether it is a genuine original I have my doubts. Although it is tin plate it is unlikely that it would be so well preserved being dated 1901. Nevertheless the wonderful choice of wording demands it be found a place in my railway room.

I am reliably informed that despite the fact it purports to be *slightly* older than me it has managed to remain better preserved.

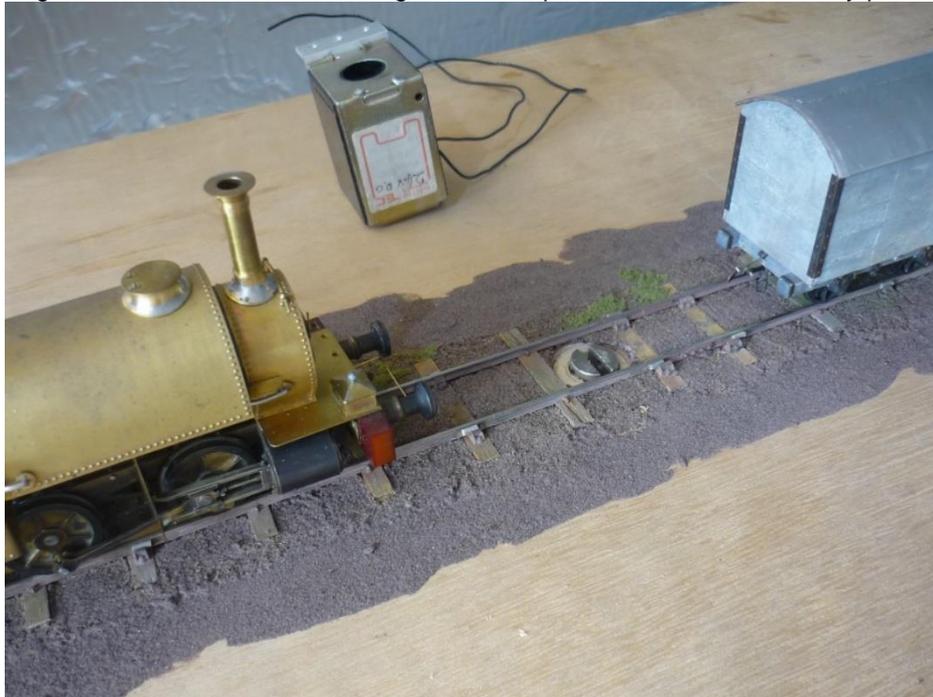
Best regards

Mike Bennett

More on the coupling saga – Trevor Hughes

Over the last few weeks I have been completing goods wagons for my Tallylyn Railway layout. The question of coupling – and uncoupling- in an exhibition environment is always a subject for heated discussion. The layout was originally to be equipped with Alex Jackson couplers, one of only a few systems that can couple and uncouple – on the move- and allow for the wagons to be left at any place thereafter. The AJ is extremely unobtrusive but is just as unprototypical in appearance as any other system. It also has an inherent fault which makes it difficult to couple long vehicles, or vehicles on a curve.

I have had a twelve month period to contemplate this and decided, only recently, to rip out all the original track mounted electromagnets and replace them with some very powerful 24 volt solenoids.



For me it is essential that the method of coupling remains invisible, I also need to be able to uncouple from a control position which may be six or seven feet away from the magnet. This means that the coupling system should function correctly without the operator having an exact knowledge of where the magnet is situated. A tall order you might think. I decided to opt for the Spratt and Winkle. A

hook at one end of the vehicle and a loop of 0.6mm brass wire at the other. Only a few wagons will be so equipped – all of the others will move from one fiddle yard to the other without the need to uncouple and will therefore have scale hook and shackle couplings. The fiddle yard operators can sort these out. The main modification to Derek Mundy's original is to put a latch on top of the hook in order to stop the hook re-engaging when the magnet is passed. These have been left over from Dingham 7mm scale couplers which we have been fitting to stock intended for the Newtown MRS "Montgomery" layout. The tolerances built into Derek's system give great confidence that this will work reliably without a great deal of running maintenance. The coupling is operated by the magnet pulling down the two iron wire links fastened to the coupler arm. There is a substantial gap between the bottom of the coupler and the top of the magnet pole face, so a powerful magnet is required. These coils have a continuous rating of 0.5 amp, running on 24 volts, if I require extra power I can always over-run them on 36 volts, but at the moment it all seems to be working well.

Kyburg: Switzerland in Z Scale Revisited – David Gotliffe

Having diverted my attention to the refurbishment of the Craven Arms club layout in recent months, our enforced isolation has recently enabled me to revisit my own Swiss Z Scale layout, Kyburg. This was designed to fit on one 1200 x 600mm baseboard, and hence in the back of my car. This greatly restricted the size of the fiddle yard, which had just 5 roads. I figured I could easily remove and replace trains at exhibitions as I went along, but in practice this isn't easy as exhibitors are constantly busy ensuring frequent train movements and talking to visitors. I have therefore added a small 40mm-wide extension, which has allowed me to add 2 further roads to the fiddle yard. I can still swap trains around at exhibitions from time to time with additional stock stored behind the layout, but at busy times there are now sufficient trains on the layout to provide a constant variety out front.

The photos below were taken by Simon Gotliffe during my running session on 24th April.

The expanded fiddle yard. The 40mm 2-road extension can be clearly seen



The Switch building. As with all buildings on the layout, it is scratch-built, mainly from Plastikard. The original is in Zurich.



The Schnyder Clothing store in the centre of Kyburg, and the surrounding area. The building is based on a store in Rapperswil, a small town on the banks of Lake Zurich



An RBDe560 “Colibri” EMU approaches Kyburg with a local St Gallen to Zurich train. The 4-car Colibri units are widely used on local services on the SBB (the Swiss Federal Railway). My model comprises four hand-made bodies mounted on three Marklin coach chassis and an American Z-Lines (AZL) motorised “Bud” chassis. The latter uses a coreless motor and runs beautifully.



A busy day at Kyburg. A BLS (Bern Lotschberg Simplon) train is about to depart from Platform 1 with a Basel to Milan service, which will take it through both the Lotschberg and Simplon Tunnels.



The BLS express has now departed from Platform 1, and is on its way to Milan. It is hauled by an RE465, an updated version of SBB's Class 460 locomotive. The BLS operates 18 such locomotives, specially modified to provide greater tractive effort in order to tackle the steep gradients on either side of the Lotschberg summit tunnel.



Later in the day a service from Chur approaches Platform 3 at Kyburg, hauled by an ageing but reliable RE4/4". Large numbers of these were built by SLM at Winterthur between 1964 and 1985 and many remain in service, although now mainly confined to shorter regional services. An express service

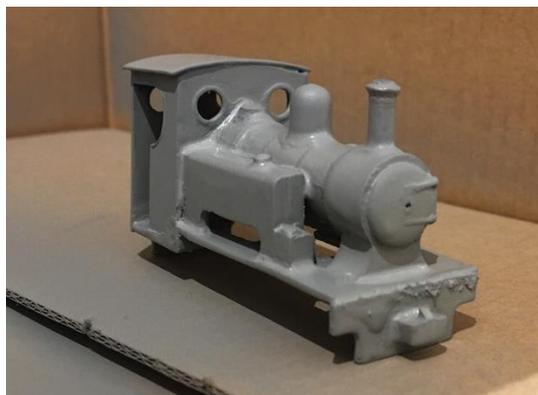
awaits departure at Platform 1, headed by an SBB Class 460 locomotive.

The road and rail tunnels immediately to the east of Kyburg station. The prototype is at Baden, near Zurich, and has a very similar configuration.



Some 009 Stuff – Sam Ryan

Here is what I'm currently working on (even though my workload at the shop has been somewhat chaotic these last few weeks).

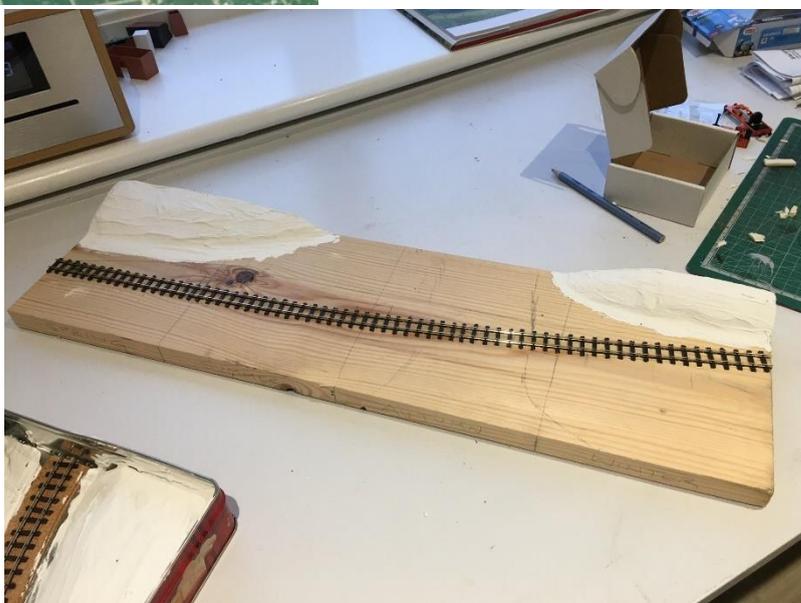


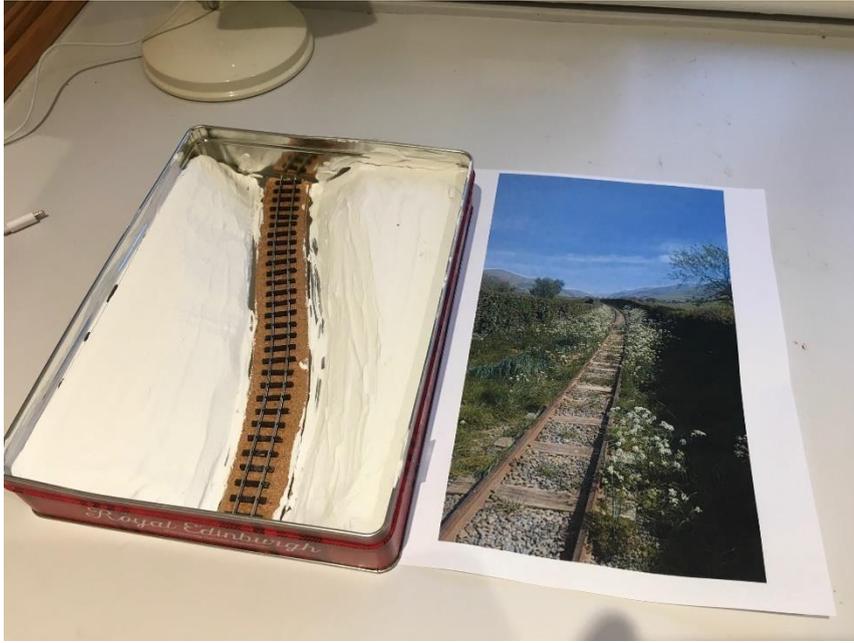
Decided to give my Kerr Stuart 'Hampton' a repaint as I wasn't too happy with the first attempt in its livery.



On the subject of locos, I've decided to attempt in converting my 'Rheneas' loco into a 'Dolgoch' loco. More updates on its progress in due course.

I'm also having a go at a couple of diorama boards in the hope of practicing and fine tuning my scenery skills. More to follow on this one once I've decided on its finished look.





Again practicing scenery techniques in a more confined diorama piece. The photo is sort of what I'm hoping to achieve all being well 🙏🙏

So that is what's on my current workbench.

Due to all this lockdown, coronavirus etc etc, my work at the butchers had been extremely hectic. So finding time and the mental strength to work on these projects has been a bit tricky. But hopefully come the next newsletter, I'll have something more intriguing to share.

Sam Ryan

Some Gauge 1 Stuff – Scott Stephenson

I came along to ASRM meetings to re kindle my love of model railways but knew I had a few projects to clear out of the way first. Although Gauge 1 is stated as being the largest of the 'Model Railway' scales, I do believe it to be the extreme.... Which it is. but here are some photos of the finished LNER J38 and some stock I have made for it. All an expensive game and I've yet to build a garden railway to run it on!



The finished J38. Although it has yet to be steamed since painting and will require a little 'Setting to Work'



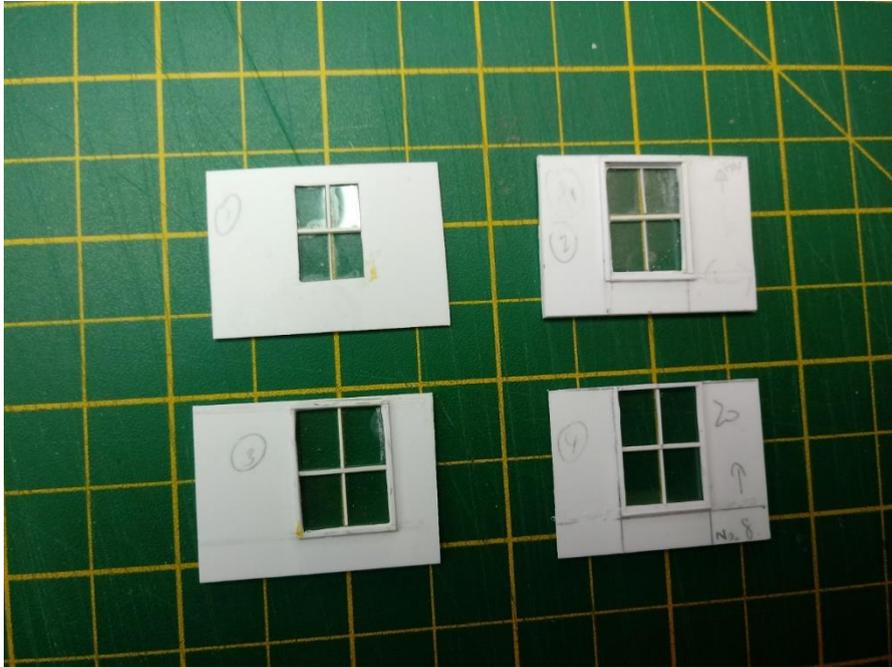
The beautiful detail you can achieve with G1 it wonderful.



Not the longest pre war goods train by any stretch of the imagination



Plasticard Challenge - Tim Lewis



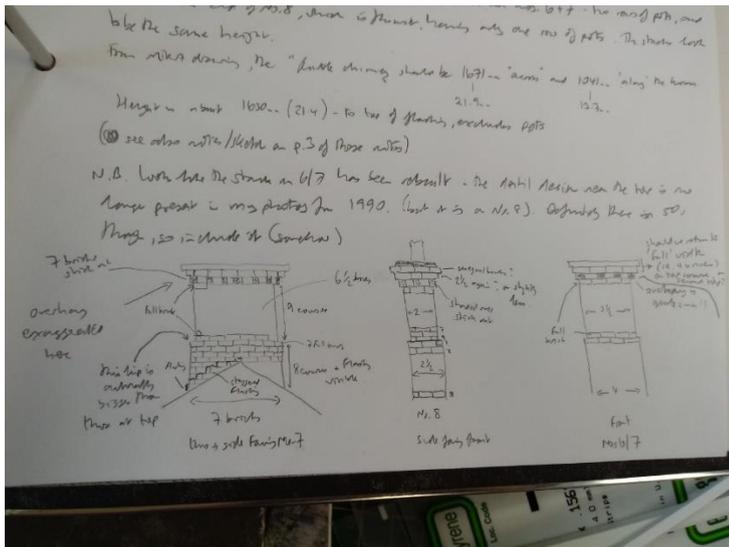
Since the last newsletter I seem to have been concentrating on other modelling projects (in between enjoying the nice weather), so the station cottages that I'm building as part of the Plasticard Challenge have taken a bit of a back seat. However, a bit of progress has been made. I've been experimenting with window construction (no commercial items are available that are the right size):

Don't worry about the odd stray bit of glue on the glazing: these are just test pieces using transparent plastic and various different sizes of readily available plastic strip. The final ones will use glass (remember Stephen Duffell's talk on microscope slide covers)? I think I've more or less finalised a method, and sizes of plastic strip, that I'm happy with. Here's one positioned loosely in place on the building (which has received a coat of primer since last month):



Of course, despite having stocked up on plastic strip before starting this challenge, I now find that there are a couple of other sizes that I need, so I'm waiting for an order to arrive from Eileen's Emporium before doing any more on the windows. I also think it will be easier to paint the outer frames before installing them, so again I'm waiting for the correct paint. I have however made a start on the chimneys. As with most things, these are not straightforward, having a few decorative brick courses at the top, which you can just about see on this not very clear photo:

I started by carefully examining this and other photographs and making some sketches and scribbles - you probably won't be able to read my writing, but you get the



idea. (As an aside, I discovered that one of the two stacks on this terrace has actually been rebuilt at some time since the 1960s - always try and work from contemporary photographs, and never take anything on modern photographs for granted!) Having determined dimensions (number of bricks etc), I made the four walls, laminated them onto plain 30 thou plasticard, mitred them and glued them together. I haven't yet done the decorative courses at the top, or the slightly wider section at the base (which will just be another lamination of brick-embossed plasticard:

Notice that I've made the stack over-long and cut a slot in the ends so that it can fit over the internal walls to add a bit of stability. The idea is that the chimneys will be attached to the roof, which will lift off as a piece to allow access to the inside for maintenance, or as and when I want to add an interior. Here's a picture with the roof loosely in place:



The roof is made of card rather than plasticard, as recommended by Geoff Taylor. That's as far as I've got with the cottages to date: I'll give another update for the next newsletter.

4mm Wagons – Tim Lewis

I've been doing a few other bits and pieces as well. The Scalefour Society is running the "Socially-Distanced Challenge", the aim being to start something new to be finished in time for the next Society show (whenever that is), and to document the build on the Society web forum. I don't need much of an excuse to start another wagon, so I'm building an ex-North Eastern Railway Lowmac from an old Connoisseur Models kit:

The main etched components are fine and go together well, with lots of nice half-etched rivet detail to press up. I've had to modify things a bit to facilitate sprung wheels - definitely desirable for a long wheelbase wagon such as this. The castings aren't too bad, but will benefit from a bit of improvement - springing the buffers, refining the axlebox/springs etc. No brakegear is provided (apart from a brake lever) - on the prototype, much



of this was hidden behind the very low sideframes, but some was visible, and it looks a bit bare with nothing there, so I've fabricated some hangers/shoes from some other etches - this has been the fiddliest part so far, partly because of the need to support the brakes somehow underneath the ramped ends of the body. Eventually I got the brakes mounted, and it now looks like this:

I've not yet cut the brake cross-shaft to length, but I'm quite happy with how the brakes turned out.

The other thing I've been doing is adding screw couplings to some Bachmann LNER vans and opens. I bought about 30 or so when they first came out a few years back, and swapped the wheels for P4 ones but didn't do anything else to them. The bodywork and underframe is decent, but the tension lock couplings are horrid, so I've made a start on replacing them with Masokits screw couplings. Here's a before-and-after shot - a big improvement I think:



The Masokits couplings are a bit of a fiddle to make up, but the end result is nice, and they're very strong. I've done 7 vehicles so far, so still a way to go! Hopefully I'll get a bit more done in the coming month and put something in the next newsletter.

Recent Arrivals – Stephen Duffell

Two new coaches for my layout are these Tricomposite vehicles. They were built and painted for me by Geoff Hayes from Southwark Bridge kits. They are in London and South Western Railway livery of salmon and brown as used in the early 1900's. Each tri-composite coach had seats for First, Second and Third class passengers, Second class not being abolished on the LSWR until 1918. The coaches were for main line use and could be dropped off at a branch to provide a through service.



LSWR 42ft 6in Tri-composite coach. Built 1889. The lavatory could only be accessed by the first class passengers.



LSWR 48ft Brake Tri-composite coach. Built 1891. The additional length had provided a guard's compartment, and once again only first class passengers have use of a toilet

Stephen Duffell

Internet & Social Media News

With so much taking place on the digital social media platforms I thought it would be good to air and advertise some of what is going on,,,,, or could be going on. I see this as a standing item that we can add to listing all the online resources in Social Media. Please feel free to forward any you would wish to add.

1. First of all ... our own Website: shrewsburyrailwaymodellers.co.uk Please take a look

As you may know, David Evans recently stepped down as our Website editor and we would like a new one please! This is a critical person, particularly at this time, when we are not meeting. The website is our window through which the public can view us as well as a meeting place for members.

The job is what you make it. At the moment, Ian Payne looks after the website as the Webmaster but we need someone to organise the content; requesting changes, supplying the content, adding notices when necessary, keeping the events section up to date and asking folk to contribute by transcribing the meetings (when we have them!) and writing articles, providing photos etc. It isn't an onerous task so little and often will be quite acceptable. The Website editor has been attending our twice yearly committee meeting.

If you are interested, please let Nick C know nick by email at .

2. **SHREWSBURY MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION – Facebook Page and Group**

For those that haven't discovered it: The Shrewsbury Model Railway Show have a Facebook Page; which is for them to transmit communications to us and the general public. However, they also run a Group which is for us... who wish to be involved in exhibiting and to contribute to the dialogue and organising of the exhibition. It serves as an excellent platform for local modellers between times though.

3. **GOSPORT JUNCTION – Facebook Page**

A friend of mine (not in Shropshire but Hampshire) is building a model railway called GOSPORT JUNCTION based upon that town on the south coast. Those of you taking part in the Plasticard Challenge may be interested to see his build of Fort Brockhurst Station in the making. I'm sure there may be some sage advice to help him on his way too.

4. **BRITISH RAILWAY MODELLING – Facebook Page**

An excellent group on facebook that fills your timeline with a constant feed of model railways!

FOR SALES & WANTS

N gauge track for sale. Contact Peter Watson

Market Drayton.